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U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

Opportunities for farm ownership...Wyoming

Washington

1933

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MAR 2 3 1933

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RAY LYMAN WILBUR, Secretary

Opportunities for Farm Ownership

on the

Riverton Irrigation Project

Wyoming

ELWOOD MEAD

Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation

308
Z
Box 371

UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1933

Lined section of the Wyoming Canal, below Pilot Butte power plant, showing permanent type of construction on Riverton Project

RIVERTON FEDERAL IRRIGATION PROJECT

INFORMATION FOR INTENDING SETTLERS ON THE RIVERTON PROJECT, WYO.

LOCATION OF PROJECT

The Riverton project is located in Fremont County, Wyo., on the ceded portion of the Wind River Indian Reservation. It lies near the center of the Wind River Basin, at a distance of 9 to 28 miles north and northwest of Riverton, the nearest railroad point, a modern town of 1,600 people on the Chicago & North Western Railway. Pavillion, a small town with electric lights and a supply of excellent water, lies in the northwest part of the project at a distance of 25 miles from Riverton. Staple supplies can be purchased here. It has daily mail service from Riverton.

Riverton is located on the Chicago & North Western Railway about 130 miles west of Casper, Wyo., or about 1,250 miles west of Chicago. It may also be reached by auto bus from Bonneville on the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad, about 30 miles from the northeast.

The highways leading to Riverton from the north, east, and south are open to travel throughout the year and are kept in excellent condition. The high mountain passes immediately west, however, are blocked with snow for a few months in winter. During the summer one may conveniently visit the Riverton project, Teton National Park, and Yellowstone Park on one trip by going northwest from Riverton over Two-Gwo-Tee Pass to Jackson Hole and the Teton National Park and then north to the Yellowstone Park.

ENGINEERING WORKS AND IRRIGABLE AREA

The water for the project is diverted from Wind River by a concrete diversion dam, about 35 miles above Riverton, into the Wyoming Canal, which has a capacity of 2,200 second-feet. The Riverton project is entitled to a large portion of the natural flow of Wind River, which holds up unusually well during the late summer, as its source is in the perpetual snow banks, glaciers, and natural lakes of the Wind River Mountains. The Pilot Butte Reservoir, with a capacity of 30,000 acre-feet, has been completed.

The main irrigation works are large enough to supply water to 100,000 acres, the estimated area of the project when completed. Water is now available for about 32,000 acres. Irrigation works will be built to serve additional land, which will be opened to settlement

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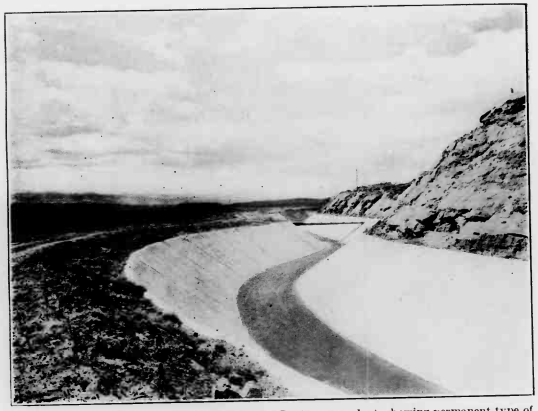
INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE



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as demand develops. Water is delivered to each farm. It is planned to construct such drainage works as may be needed as a part of the irrigation system as the need becomes manifest.

PUBLIC LAND AVAILABLE

During the first 90 days after any public land is opened to entry it may be taken only by men with military service. Prior to October 1, 1932, land on the Riverton project has been opened to entry at various times and preference right of ex-service men to enter such land has expired, so that all applications are considered alike regardless of military service. About 100 of these farms remain available. Additional land will be opened to settlement later.

The land was formerly a part of the Wind River Indian Reservation, and each entryman must pay $1.50 per acre to the Indians for the gross area of the farm. Of this charge 50 cents an acre is paid at the time of making entry and 25 cents an acre each year thereafter for 4 years.

HOW TO OBTAIN A FARM

One who wishes to obtain one of these farms should secure an application blank from the Superintendent, Riverton project, Riverton, Wyo., or the Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington, D. C. This form should then be completely filled out, deferring the selection of a farm until the land has been examined, and returned to the project superintendent; or if the applicant prefers, he may first visit the land and then make application. In any case, he must visit the land and meet the examining board before being definitely accepted. The board which has been appointed to determine the fitness of the applicant will meet him at his convenience. Briefly, the qualifications are a full homestead right, 2 years' experience in farming, physical ability to do farm work, evidence of good character and industry, and property useful on a farm or financial backing amounting to at least $2,000, except in the case of the smaller farm units for which the property qualification is less.

The purpose of these qualifications is to eliminate those prospective settlers who through lack of health, experience, or financial backing are unlikely to succeed and probably would lose their investment of time and money, and as far as possible, to insure the successful applicants against failure. It is the duty of the examining board to determine whether the applicant has a reasonable chance of success.

The employees of the Bureau of Reclamation at Riverton will, whenever possible, take visitors over the land and assist them in selecting farms. They may be relied upon to give practical advice based on a knowledge of local conditions and with no other interest except the success of the prospective settler.

PRIVATE LAND AVAILABLE

The land for which water is available is about evenly divided between public and private property. Very little privately owned land has been improved and a large part of the unimproved land is for sale, usually on favorable terms at from $5 to $10 an acre. To persons not qualified to make homestead entry who may wish to purchase privately owned lands the superintendent will furnish a list of such lands for sale, together with reliable information concerning individual tracts.

HOME-SEEKERS' RATES

Attractive home-seekers' rates to Riverton from Omaha and points east are available. Detailed information regarding passenger and freight rates may be obtained by addressing the Division Freight and Passenger Agent, Chicago & North Western Railway, Casper, Wyo.

CLIMATIC, SOIL, AND CROP CONDITIONS

The average annual maximum temperature is about 97° F., the average annual minimum about −28° F., and the average mean annual temperature about 43° F. The mean annual rainfall is about 10 inches.

The average period between latest and earliest killing frosts is 140 days, or from about May 10 to about September 27. The altitude above sea level varies from 5,000 to 5,550 feet.

The soil varies from a sandy loam to clay loam, and both types of soil will be found on many farms. The heavier soils usually carry a growth of salt sage and the lighter ones a black sage. This black sage is seldom grubbed, but after the land has been plowed the brush is raked and burned or the sagebrush is sometimes removed by dragging a railroad rail over the land before plowing. The lighter soils contain no alkali; the heavier ones contain a little soluble white alkali, but rarely enough to injure crops. Black alkali is unknown. Tracts which were known to contain an excessive amount of alkali or were thought to be difficult to drain if they become seeped have been eliminated from the irrigable area, as were patches of light sandy soil. Soil and climatic conditions are well adapted for the production of alfalfa, sweet clover, hard and soft wheat, oats, barley, corn, beans, seed peas and beans, potatoes, sugar beets, garden vegetables, small fruits, and melons. Successful production of these crops may be observed on the settled portions of the Riverton project and under the older neighboring private irrigation systems under similar soil and climatic conditions. Wheat is of fine quality and averages 25 to 30 bushels per acre. Oats weighing 40 pounds per bushel average 40 to 50 bushels per acre, and barley weighing 52 pounds per bushel averages about the same. Acclimated corn of suitable varieties regularly matures and produces good yields. Excellent crops of

potatoes, especially the red varieties, are produced. The sugar content of beets in this territory is unusually high, about 17 per cent, so that the beets bring a higher price per ton. When the land has been brought into a good state of cultivation and better transportation facilities are available, sugar beets will probably be a leading crop. Berries and garden vegetables, especially tomatoes, are highly successful, both as to yield and quality.

CROP UTILIZATION AND MARKETS

The project is surrounded on three sides by excellent range on which large numbers of cattle and sheep are run. Experience proves that the systematic feeding of ewes, lambs, and baby beef, if properly handled over a period of years, is successful. In many cases, a small band of sheep can be profitably kept on the farm. Hogs can be raised and fattened on corn and barley or, if preferred, they can be shipped at about the same price per pound to eastern points for feeding when weighing about 125 pounds each. Hogs are free from cholera. Wyoming does not as yet supply sufficient dairy products for her own needs. With irrigated pasture and plenty of home-grown forage, an excellent opportunity for dairying exists. A well-equipped creamery at Riverton offers a cash market for all cream produced and will pay transportation charges on such cream if sent by stage. As the dairy business increases there will be an opportunity for a cheese factory.

Local production fails to supply the Wyoming demand for eggs and chickens. Many carloads of turkeys are shipped annually from Fremont County. These turkeys grade high and always command a top price. With proper care, turkeys should be a satisfactory side line on every farm. Several carloads of fine honey are shipped each year from the county and the keeping of bees can accompany the necessary production of alfalfa and sweetclover.

After the project is well under development the agricultural program should be based on the production of forage crops and grain for feeding milk cows, sheep, hogs and beef cattle; and sugar beets, potatoes, beans, and seed crops as cash crops with poultry, bees, vegetables, and small fruits as side lines.

Fair to good crops of small grain, potatoes, corn, and beans can be raised on raw land, depending on local conditions and the skill with which the land is farmed. The soil as a rule contains little humus, and it is advisable to seed alfalfa or sweetclover as early as possible, either with or without nurse crops, and plow one cutting under the second year. Sweetclover is recommended for this crop, as it costs less for seed, a stand is more easily secured, its feeding value is nearly equal to and fertilizing value is fully twice that of alfalfa, and the soil yields more readily to cultivation after the crops have been plowed under. Irrigating and plowing the preceding year improves the first year's crops.

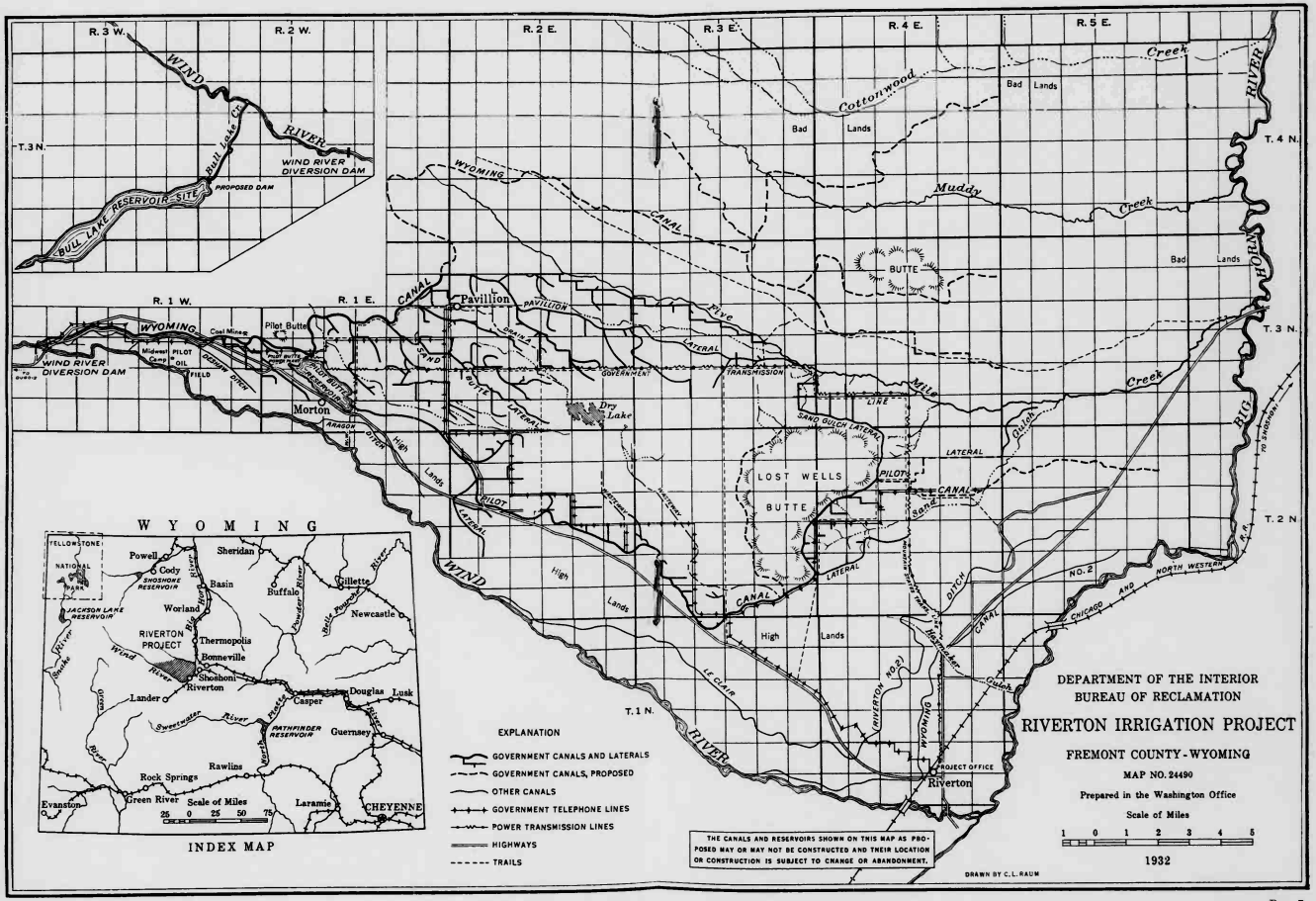
Every new settler should have a few chickens and one milk cow as soon as he establishes residence, and additional cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys as soon as forage is available. Successful farmers on this project, as elsewhere, produce most of their living from their own farms and grow cash crops to take care of necessary cash expenses and for profit.

To obtain the best returns from many crops, such as potatoes, beans, vegetables and fruits, and poultry, it will be necessary for the settlers to concentrate on a few standard varieties and institute systematic and rigid grading. For this purpose cooperative marketing associations are essential. Four such organizations already exist covering turkeys, wool, potatoes, and beans. These organizations have been instrumental in materially increasing net prices to the producers, in improving quality of the products, in enforcing standard grading, and in finding car-lot markets when individual growers were unable to do so.

The best wholesale markets of the Riverton project are Omaha and Denver. The prices of wheat, oats, barley, and corn are governed by local conditions and are seldom much less than the Omaha prices. Corn is usually fed by the grower. Fat livestock is shipped to Casper where there is a modern packing plant, or to Omaha or Denver. Large numbers of cattle and sheep are shipped annually from the surrounding range to feeding territories in eastern Wyoming, Colorado, and Nebraska. The feeding of this stock locally should absorb the forage produced on the Riverton project. The railroad and the oil and mining towns of central and southern Wyoming offer a large market for dairy and poultry products and vegetables.

TRANSPORTATION

The graveled State highway 87–W, from Riverton to Jackson Hole and the south entrance of Yellowstone Park, runs along the southwest boundary of the project. An excellent 7 miles of graded road connects Pavillion with this highway. The land for which water is now available joins this highway and all lies within 10 miles of it and is from 9 to 25 miles from Riverton. Other roads traverse the project and will be further improved as settlement increases. A branch of the Chicago & North Western can be easily constructed into the heart of the project, and it is believed that such a branch will be built as soon as settlement has progressed sufficiently to justify such construction.


R. 3 W.
R. 2 W.
R. 2 E.
R. 3 E.
R. 4 E.
R. 5 E.
R. 1 W.
R. 1 E.
T. 3 N.
T. 4 N.
T. 2 N.
T. 1 N.
WIND RIVER
WIND RIVER DIVERSION DAM
BULL LAKE CR.
BULL LAKE RESERVOIR SITE
PROPOSED DAM
WYOMING CANAL
PAVILLION
PAVILLION LATERAL
Dry Lake
Morton
Pilot Butte
Midwest Oil Co.
Coal Mines
GOSHEN IRRIGATION DISTRICT
CHICAGO, BURLINGTON & QUINCY R.R.
ARAGON
HIGH LANDS
PILOT BUTTE LATERAL
GOVERNMENT TRANSMISSION LINE
SAND DUCH LATERAL
LOST WELLS BUTTE
PILOT CANAL
SANDUCH LATERAL
MILLER CREEK LATERAL
RETTENMEYER LATERAL
LE CLAIR LATERAL
RIVERTON NO. 2 DITCH
MONTANA
CHICAGO AND NORTH WESTERN R.R.
BUTTE
Cottonwood Creek
Bad Lands
Muddy Creek
HORN RIVER
BIG
Miller Creek
Pilot LATERAL
Sand
Dutch
Le Clair
Rettenmeyer
Riverton
PROJECT OFFICE
TO SHOSHONI
TO LANDER
TO CASPER
TO CHEYENNE
TO EVANSTON
TO GREEN RIVER
TO ROCK SPRINGS
TO LARAMIE
TO BUFFALO
TO SHERIDAN
TO GILLETTE
TO NEWCASTLE
TO DOUGLAS
TO LUSK
TO GUERNSEY
TO POWELL
TO CODY
TO BASIN
TO WORLAND
TO THERMOPOLIS
TO BONNEVILLE
TO JACKSON LAKE RESERVOIR
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GOVERNMENT CANALS, PROPOSED
OTHER CANALS
GOVERNMENT TELEPHONE LINES
POWER TRANSMISSION LINES
HIGHWAYS
TRAILS
Scale of Miles
25 0 25 50 75
THE CANALS AND RESERVOIRS SHOWN ON THIS MAP AS PROPOSED MAY OR MAY NOT BE CONSTRUCTED AND THEIR LOCATION OR CONSTRUCTION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE OR ABANDONMENT.
DRAWN BY C. L. RAUM
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
RIVERTON IRRIGATION PROJECT
FREMONT COUNTY - WYOMING
MAP NO. 24490
Prepared in the Washington Office
Scale of Miles
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
1932

DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLY

Water suitable for domestic use is usually found by drilling to depths of from 60 to 200 feet. Some of the water contains a little soda but not enough to impair its value for stock or to make it seriously objectionable for home use. As irrigation increases the level of the ground water will rise so that water will be found at a less depth and seepage streams will appear which will be available for stock use. Water from the canals can be used in summer and stored in cisterns for winter use.

COST OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION

Under the contract between the Government and the Midvale Irrigation District, which will eventually embrace all the irrigable land on the project, the cost of the water right will be repaid in 40 annual installments beginning on December 31, 1935. As the project is not completed the exact cost can not be stated at this time but the settler will be required to pay to the Government the actual cost of construction. It is estimated that the cost will be about $90 per acre including drainage. The present plan of repayment is as follows:

Three years, 1935–1937, 1 per cent or about 90 cents per acre.
Two years, 1938–1939, 1½ per cent or about $1.35 per acre.
Nine years, 1940–1948, 2 per cent or about $1.80 per acre.
Fifteen years, 1949–1963, 2½ per cent or about $2.25 per acre.
Six years, 1964–1969, 3 per cent or about $2.70 per acre.
Three years, 1970–1972, 3½ per cent or about $3.15 per acre.
Two years, 1973–1974, 5 per cent or about $4.50 per acre.

Interest is charged only on payments not paid when due.

If considered from an investment standpoint it will be found that approximately $28 invested at 6 per cent interest on January 1, 1935, will be sufficient to liquidate all of the payments on the $90 per acre water right. For example, the total construction charges on a 40-acre farm unit at $90 per acre would amount to $3,600 to be repaid over a period of 40 years. If the owner of this unit would invest $28 per acre at 6 per cent interest, the proceeds plus the investment would be ample to retire all the payments on the $3,600 water-right contract.

The minimum water rental or maintenance charge for 1933 will be 50 cents per irrigable acre whether water is used or not. Payment of this charge entitles the user to 2 acre-feet of water for each 50 cents. Additional water, if desired, will be delivered at 25 cents per acre-foot. A levy of 50 cent per acre has been made against all private and entered land in the irrigation district. New homesteaders will pay 50 cents per acre at the time a farm is assigned to them. Similar charges will be levied each year. The charge of 50 cents per acre is not sufficient to cover expenses but it is believed that the actual cost will not exceed $1.50 per acre. The levy will be increased to an amount sufficient to meet the cost whenever in the opinion of the Secretary of the Interior economic conditions permit.

It is expected that the irrigation district will take over the operation and maintenance of the project on December 31, 1934. If it appears that the district is unable to finance the work at that time the date of taking over the maintenance may on request of the district be postponed a year at a time until the district is in financial position to assume this work and the Government will continue in the meantime to operate the project.

COST OF MATERIALS

A good grade lignite coal is sold at Riverton at $6 per ton in nut sizes. A similar coal can be obtained at wagon mines from 1 to 25 miles off the project for $3.50 per ton. There is opportunity for settlers to cut poles and posts for their own use on neighboring mountains when they are not busy on farms. There is a charge of 5 to 10 cents per post or pole. Permits must be secured from the local Indian office.

Surfaced native pine and spruce lumber can be had at Du Noir, about 15 miles above Dubois, or 100 miles above Riverton, at $25 per thousand feet.

The cost at Riverton, Wyo., in 1932 for materials and farm implements commonly required is as follows:

Oregon fir lumber	per M	$40. 00
Shingles	do	3. 30
Vertical grain flooring	do	50. 00
Battens	100 feet	1. 50
Pine logs, 12-foot	each	. 60
Fence posts, pine	do	0. 13–0. 17
Fence posts, cedar	do	. 20
Fence posts, steel	do	. 45
3-ply roofing	100 square feet	3. 25
2-ply roofing	do	2. 75
Staples and nails	pound	. 07
Cement	(paper) sack	. 90
Barb-wire fence, black	80-rod spool	3. 90
Alfalfa in stack	ton	6. 00–8. 00
Work harness	set	45. 00–65. 00
Farm wagon with box	each	180. 00
Farm truck with box	do	130. 00
Disk harrow	do	75. 00
Spiked-tooth harrow, 2-inch	do	25. 50
Walking plow, 12-inch	do	21. 25
Sulky plow, 14-inch	do	65. 00
Mowing machine	do	95. 00
Horse rake	do	65. 00
Cultivator, 1-horse	do	10. 40
Drill	do	140. 00
Stacker	do	129. 00
Binder	do	256. 00
Manure spreader	do	186. 00
Grindstone	do	15. 00

Endgate seeder	each	$30.00
Cream separator	do	102.00
Martin ditcher	do	80.00
Cookstove	do	45.00
No. 12 Hot-Blast heating stove	do	20.00
Slip scraper	do	15.00

COST OF LIVESTOCK

Work horses can be bought locally at $50 to $75 each, good milk cows for about $50, sows for $12, hens for 60 cents, and sheep for $4 each. These were selling prices for grade animals in 1932.

SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

A 3-room modern school house has been completed recently at Pavillion. Part of the project is in the Riverton school district which maintains a standard accredited high school fully equipped. Both the Pavillion and Riverton districts operate school busses for the benefit of pupils living at a distance from school. One church building has been erected at Pavillion and ministers of other denominations hold services there as frequently as the attendance justifies. There are six church organizations at Riverton. The Bureau of Reclamation maintains telephone connections with neighboring towns over its own lines. These lines are available for private calls at established toll rates. Pin space on poles is available for rental to farmers' associations.

RECREATION

Some of the best big-game hunting and fishing in the United States lies from 15 to 100 miles from the project. Scenic and recreational attractions of the surrounding mountains are unexcelled. Jackson Hole, Teton National Park, and Yellowstone National Park may be easily reached in one day by automobile over good highways.

ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

The local employees of the Bureau of Reclamation at Riverton and Pavillion are always ready and willing to cooperate with the settlers in promoting their welfare. There is no charge for any service rendered and no commission or profit is accepted by Federal or State employees from new homesteaders or purchasers of private land. The county agricultural agent located at Lander frequently visits the project and will gladly render all possible assistance to the new settler in arranging his farm program and in assisting the farmers to organize needed cooperative enterprises. The Smith-Hughes teacher of vocational agriculture in the Riverton high school can also be of service, and the assistance of the technical staff of the agricultural department of the University of Wyoming is also available.

Further information regarding farms on the Riverton project may be secured from the following:

Dr. ELWOOD MEAD, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington, D. C.

H. D. COMSTOCK, Superintendent, Riverton project, Riverton, Wyo.

J. LEVER, Division Freight & Passenger Agent, Chicago & North Western Railway, Chicago, Ill.

R. C. KERR, Manager, Industrial Department, Chicago & North Western Railway, Chicago, Ill.

EXECUTIVE MANAGER, Department of Commerce and Industry, Cheyenne, Wyo.

SECRETARY, Riverton Chamber of Commerce, Riverton, Wyo.

Diversion dam across Wind River, 35 miles above Riverton, diverts water for entire project through the head gate at right into the Wyoming Canal. Federal-aid Highway 87-W, which skirts the project, crosses Wind River over this dam

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END OF
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